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ABSTRACT

A pilot project was undertaken in South Bedfordshire, England, to develop a work-based job training program for out-of-school youth. The program was based on a partnership between local educators and employers and featured an integrated curriculum that combined work-based learning with off-the-job training. Besides integrating occupational and basic skills, the program provided for instruction in such areas as communication, numeracy, manipulative, and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) skills. Tutors developed training curricula during the training process rather than before it. The training model called for counselors to play a central role, functioning as (1) liaisons between supervisors, trainers, tutors, and trainees and (2) teachers and providers of guidance and support. Although a few employers regarded the program as an opportunity to obtain cheap labor, the majority of those employers contacted welcomed the idea of youth training and went to considerable lengths to provide work experiences that included variety. At the end of the program's first year, most of the staff agreed that while some differences existed between the approaches of supervisors and tutors, some aims supported by the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) approach were already being practiced by supervisors. (Appendixes to this report include data tabulated for the induction questionnaire, the tutor/counselor questionnaire, the form used to assess progress and attainment, and a sample work-based training unit.) (MN)

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CONVERTING WORKING INTO LEARNING

An appraisal of an LEA Foundation Year Training Scheme

Jenny Shackleton
Project Director

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Project Researchers

FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT

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Dear Sir/Madam

CONVERTING WORKING INTO LEARNING

I enclose a copy of the above report which evaluates, as the Preface indicates, a major act of faith by a local authority in responding to the needs of its unemployed young people.

The report is a detailed description of the way in which Bedfordshire set up a large scale scheme of foundation training, commencing in 1982. The FEU simply facilitated the appraisal although it was pleased to note that the scheme utilised many of the ideas promulgated by FEU with respect to vocational preparation.

The Bedfordshire scheme provided training for almost 500 trainees each year and served as a pilot for YTS. This report chronicles the way it was organised and run. It describes the processes of initial assessment; analyses in detail the characteristics and needs of the trainers; examines the perceptions of the employers' supervisors and the training centre staff; and explains the processes of integration through visits, feedback and the role of counsellors and tutors.

It contains a wealth of information for those who wish to set up similar schemes or check their own schemes against an exemplar. Chapter 4 explains the way in which Bedfordshire responded to the initial evaluation. It has now been subsumed into YTS, but the design of applied work-based training units represents an attempt to create 'an instrument for converting working into learning'; the development of a competence-based modular system; supervisor training schemes; and a confirmation of the essential role of counselling through the appointment of liaison officers. These are some of the results of reflecting on what must be recorded as a significant pioneering development in foundation training.

Yours faithfully,

Jack Mansell.

JACK MANSELL
CHIEF OFFICER

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PREFACE

i) As a forerunner of YTS programmes, the Foundation Year Scheme was significant for Bedfordshire because it represented the Authority's preparedness to move quickly and on a large scale to meet a major area of perceived need.

ii) The Scheme undertook to test certain principles and practices for work-based learning in a thorough way, and set to one side conventional but inappropriate forms of teaching and organisation.

iii) The Scheme was regarded as forming part of Bedfordshire's further education service; however, it was freed from the normal constraints on the work of colleges and LEAs.

iv) The Scheme has been regarded locally, and perhaps more widely, as a success for two reasons. First it has directly provided effective transition learning for over 1000 of South Bedfordshire's school-leavers since 1982. Secondly, it enhanced the Authority's contribution to YTS from 1983 and continues to offer a testbed for new and good practice in foundation education and training.

v) That practice has extended beyond the programmes themselves into forms of organisation which are rooted in co-operation between local colleges, centres, employers, MSC officers and other agency services.

vi) Setting aside the act of faith by the County Council and the MSC in supporting the scheme, it was only able to occur because of the body of research and advice which was readily converted into practice. The Scheme was particularly indebted to the FEU for feeding ideas and potential practices for foundation programmes into the FE system. The FEU's Experimental College Project programme offered a major opportunity to experiment and reflect systematically, to give a focus to our professional development, to evaluate our output and to share our learning.

Jenny Shackleton, Project Director
July 1985

INTRODUCTION

1 In September 1981, Bedfordshire County Council set up a Steering Group to promote universal vocational preparation for school-leavers. One of the Group's first achievements was to establish a Foundation Year Scheme commencing in 1982 : a 44-week training and work experience scheme for 460 of South Bedfordshire's school-leavers. The Scheme's administrative base, the South Bedfordshire Training Centre, was two disused school buildings in Luton. The training took place there and in certain workshops in three local colleges and one school.

2 The Scheme both provided foundation training for the 460 trainees who participated and served as a pilot for the first national YTS year due to commence in 1983. Consistent with these aims, it reflected the Manpower Services Commission's aims for the Youth Training Scheme as they were then expounded. Only unemployed school-leavers could join the South Bedfordshire Scheme in 1982; however, it was not intended as a short-term answer to joblessness. Through integrated training and planned work-experience, staff, employers and trainees together negotiated and worked through a programme which hoped to develop competent and aware young adults. The Scheme incorporated all those elements considered desirable within the Youth Training Scheme :

- induction
- personal assessment
- record and review of progress
- core skills (e.g. numeracy and literacy, communications, decision making and problem solving, some practical skills)
- occupationally based training
- planned work experience
- off-the-job training and further education
- guidance and counselling
- life skills

FEU Remit and Structure of the Report

3 The Scheme was also supported by the Further Education Unit as an Experimental College Project and it is in fulfilment of the agreement formed between the FEU and the South Bedfordshire Training Centre that this report is written. There are two main focuses :

(i) the relationship between school-leavers' aspirations and the training response;
(ii) work-based learning : planned work experience and its integration with off-the-job training.

The first focus was chosen for particular reasons. Young people leaving school undergo a crucial transition in their lives during which they are confronted by a range of perplexing questions. The choice of an occupation is a priority for all but cannot be separated from other questions associated with their abilities, aptitudes, relationships with peers, family and other groups, and their role in society as perceived by themselves and by others. Educational institutions and other agencies such as the Careers Service achieve a measure of success in assisting school-leavers make appropriate occupational choices, but too often the manner of choosing has been uninformed, unplanned and haphazard.

4 For these reasons it appeared essential that a scheme designed to assist school-leavers make effective transitions from school to work should pay considerable attention to the nature of their occupational aspirations, and that it should assist them in exploring these in relation to their needs as these emerged during the initial phases of recruitment and induction and subsequently throughout the year. The manner in which staff attempted to achieve these aims constituted the 'training response' to the aspirations of trainees participating in the Scheme. The dimensions of this response are examined at length in chapter two of the report, which is concerned primarily with the off-the-job phases of the programme, these constituting the context for the first focus.

5 Our examination of the Scheme as a provider of work-based learning (chapter three), which provides our second focus, is concerned with two perspectives of the Scheme. The first of these is the role of planned work experience in providing a basis for work-based learning. The second concerns the ways in which the Scheme attempted to integrate learning in the workplace with that occurring during off-the-job training. The roles played by employers and supervisors are seen as central in both parts of the analysis.

6 To provide the background necessary for an understanding of our examination of these two main topics within the report, chapter one outlines the structure and modes of operation of the Scheme.

1. THE STRUCTURE AND MODES OF OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

Entry to the Scheme

7 From May 1982, the Foundation Year Scheme was one of the opportunities introduced to school-leavers by the Careers Service, within local schools and through other media. By September 1982 over 900 youngsters had shown an initial interest in joining the Scheme and confirmed demand had exceeded its capacity of 460 places. During recruitment, staff explained to applicants that the training was tough and sustained, involved long hours, a high standard of personal conduct and rigorous assessment.

The Scheme's Organisation : Staff Roles and Responsibilities

8 The basis for staff's roles and responsibilities was presented in the following organisation chart :

The main relationships within the Scheme's organisation should be clear from the chart. Some terms used in the report may, however, require further explanation :

- Strand : This referred to each of the main four occupational areas, which are described in more detail in paragraph nine.
- Set : This referred to the sectors into which each strand was divided (e.g. caring in the Human and Creative strand). The daily welfare of the trainees and other staff within each set was the responsibility of a set tutor.
- Counsellor : Counsellors were responsible both for industrial liaison and for personal guidance and support of trainees. A full description of their roles is provided in chapter three.

Training Content

9 With the exception of agriculture, broad foundation skills were developed to match most local job opportunities which existed or were likely to do so. Training took place within the following four areas (the strands of the Scheme) :

i) Broad Occupational Training :

food industries	engineering
caring services	science and technology
textiles and clothing	retail and distribution
office skills	applied design
finance and information services	construction skills
	wood skills

ii) Business and Information Occupations :

business and office skills
office skills and typing
retail and distribution
computer applications
office and sales work

iii) Human and Creative Occupations

caring skills
food industry skills
applied design skills

iv) Manufacturing and Process Occupations :

science and technology
clothing and hat-making
engineering skills
construction skills

Training within these groups of skills is discussed further in the examination of the training curriculum in chapter two.

Training Structure

10 Young people entering the Scheme followed one of two main training routes, both routes possessing common patterns which are represented diagrammatically below. In both routes the trainee received instruction in basic skills (see para. 87) in both the work experience and off-the-job phases. In both, too, regular reviews and personal counselling and guidance (see para. 100) were intended as an integral part of the programme.

11 Route 1 : Broad Training and Experience (Broad Employment Strand, approximately 160 trainees*).

This route was for :

i) those who were undecided as to the specific training areas they wished to follow;
ii) less able young people or those considered to be 'at risk' in some other way and therefore requiring more individual support and guidance.

2 weeks	6 weeks	8 weeks	8 weeks	16 weeks	4 weeks
Introduction and Personal Assessment	Range of up to 5 occupational areas plus basic skills	Work Experience / Day release	Range of up to 3 occupational areas plus basic skills	Work Experience / Day release	Final Block

12 Route 2 : Specific Training and Experience (3 strands, approximately 300 trainees*). This was for those with a clear vocational bias and aptitude and had the following structure :

2 weeks	6 weeks	8 weeks	8 weeks	16 weeks	4 weeks
Introduction and Personal Assessment	Foundation Skills (1 broad occupational area)	Work Experience / Day release	Skills Refinement (1 broad occupational area)	Work Experience / Day release	Final Training Block

Thus, whichever of the two training routes was followed, the young person underwent an initial period of induction and assessment followed by a period of initial skills training which was either broad based (as in route 1) or specific to an occupational sector (as in route 2). Basic skills were an important dimension of the training for all, but particularly for those following route 1.

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* The numbers of trainees given in paragraphs 11 and 12 relate to both a September intake (approximately 280 trainees) and a November intake (approximately 180 trainees).

13 The learning objectives and sample activities to be used within each strand were collected in a common document and used as a starting-point for the planning of learning; it was not intended that this should be prescriptive and, as will be apparent, tutors introduced changes and modifications as unanticipated needs and situations arose.

Timetabling

14 Each set within each strand followed a timetable tailored to meet the needs of trainees within the set. Where necessary (such as when industrial visits were arranged or project work being pursued), modifications were made by mutual agreement among tutors involved. During the second period of off-the-job training, when project work became a particularly important part of the curriculum, such modifications were extensive. Tutors thus organised timetabling so that it would both provide trainees with a clear sense of direction and be flexible where this was appropriate.

Recruitment of Staff to the Foundation Year Scheme

15 Recruitment to the Scheme had to reflect three broad considerations :

i) the expertise of those appointed had to be consistent with the intention of creating a practical training programme;
ii) it was important that staff possessed appropriate personal qualities;
iii) the range of managerial, executive, counselling, tutorial and support staff had to be such as to allow the Centre to function effectively as the base for all operations.

16 In order to begin meeting the demands necessitated by these considerations, staff with the following attributes were sought :

* technical ability and experience in a particular skill or specialism
* broad skills and experience of work
* an awareness of community issues
* an ability to communicate with young people
* patience in responding to variable standards of work or poor motivation
* high standards of personal behaviour
* an ability to deal with young people as individuals
* an ability to work in a team
* a capacity to make plans and to implement them
* stamina

Selection was made by interview, preceded by exercises and group discussions of case studies relating to problems which were likely to be encountered during the programme.

17 Staff came to the Scheme from a wide variety of backgrounds which included : employment in industry; industrial training; involvement in YOP schemes in local colleges; vocational training in traditional further education environments. In addition to this variety of backgrounds, they possessed a variety of personal qualities and initial assumptions concerning the nature of training. Since the effectiveness of the Scheme was seen as depending largely on its ability to achieve an approach to training which encouraged flexibility, exploration and experimentation, while at the same time presenting to trainees a uniformity of approach and attitude in certain areas, it was anticipated that all staff would benefit from a continuous programme of support and development. This was extremely diverse in nature and cannot be fully described here; particular attention was, however, given to strategies for working within various groups within the Scheme's structure, to curriculum development and to the extension of occupational awareness.

Assessment and Profiling

18 Assessment and profiling emerged as major dimensions of the Foundation Year Scheme. They helped to facilitate

negotiated, participative styles of learning, enabled both trainees and tutors to achieve awareness as to what constituted acceptable levels of individual performance and generally served to enhance the working relationships of the two groups.

19 A brief description of techniques of assessment used during recruitment and induction is provided in chapter two (see paras 23-30), and assessment and reviewing during planned work experience are discussed in chapter three (paras 123ff). A full discussion of all aspects of these two important dimensions of the Scheme can be found in a separate document obtainable from the Local Government Training Board.*

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* SHACKLETON, J. and EUINTON, A. Assessment and profiling : a case history based upon the Foundation Year Project between September 1982 and August 1983. LGTB, 1983.

2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL-LEAVERS' ASPIRATIONS AND THE TRAINING RESPONSE

Introduction

20 As the foregoing description of the scope and structure of the Project will suggest, it had been anticipated during the months of planning that staff would need to respond to a broad range of occupational preferences. Previous experience in the running of local YOP schemes also indicated that the range in ability would be wide and that a considerable number of trainees would have learning difficulties.

21 It was also anticipated that a number of prospective trainees would be undergoing a difficult period of transition as they moved from school to training and work. It was not anticipated that all necessary changes in outlook would occur immediately : rather that they were likely to occur in stages and over a period of months, their pace and kind varying from trainee to trainee. The programme would therefore have to be implemented in such a manner that staff conveyed a strong sense of overall direction while at the same time being responsive to individual needs and aspirations.

22 The response of staff to the aspirations of trainees was thus seen as being inseparable from awareness of their needs. This chapter examines the range of approaches which were employed in the attempt to accommodate these two concerns in a co-ordinated training response. The first section concentrates on the range of strategies employed by Scheme Staff in assessing the occupational aspirations and needs of trainees during the early phases of recruitment and induction. The second describes the results and appraises the usefulness of a questionnaire completed by all trainees during induction, while the third is a detailed examination of the curricula evolved by tutors in response to perceived aspirations and needs.

Assessment during Recruitment and Induction

23 Since the Scheme was able to accommodate young people of all abilities and to offer a foundation training in a wide range of occupational areas, virtually everyone who applied, up to a maximum of 460, could be accepted. This meant that, at recruitment, staff could concentrate on :

(a) conveying essential information
(b) assessment of strengths, personal qualities and needs in relation to occupational aspirations.

24 As far as (b) was concerned, assessment tried to find out :

i) whether the applicant's stated occupational interest was sufficiently firm, realistic and precise to make learning based upon that interest sensible;

ii) whether in a relatively short time and with sound preparation the applicant would acquire skills to cope in a workplace, within a specific occupational area, and then after further training would develop the more complex skills needed for the chosen occupational area;

iii) whether the applicant was likely in the reasonably short-term to be accepted as a fellow employee by an enlightened workforce within that occupational sector.

25 With examinations just over, staff wished to avoid giving tests to school-leavers during recruitment. They therefore used discussions conducted on the basis of an application form and a check-list of questions. These discussions gave an impression of each applicant's level of literacy, perceived capacity in academic terms, formal learning experience, level of receptiveness, sense of personal value, experience of the world of work and knowledge of other post-school options. Where youngsters were seen to have personal difficulties in moving from school to working life, they were directed towards the Broad Employment Skills route,

which was designed to provide a wide occupational base and a greater concentration on basic skills than the other route. The Broad Employment Skills route was not, however, regarded as being purely remedial.

26 Induction operated as a continuation and extension of the process begun during recruitment. It aimed to :

* convey crucial information
* check each trainee's interests, aspirations, strengths and needs
* focus the attitudes and expectations of both trainees and staff
* introduce new ways of doing things
* introduce new relationships and learning experiences

This meant that :

i) staff needed to assess the ways in which the young person related to a training environment. This included his/her ability to work with peers and supervisors and his/her capacity to cope within a training organisation;

ii) it was important to assess the young person's capacity to contribute to his/her own learning. It was expected that trainees would at times be hostile, passive or afraid in the face of certa activities or styles of training;

iii) it was essential to know the young person's interests, capacities and aptitudes for the activities involved in one or more occupational areas and in characteristic working environments.

27 Staff tried to introduce activities in a manner which ensured that assessment occurred frequently and provided the trainee with a sense of progress within induction. In order to assess trainees according to the criteria given in the last section, the techniques of observation, related questioning, discussion and testing were used. These

pinpointed strengths and weaknesses in relation to an occupational task.

Certain features were evident in induction activities, for example :

- there were frequent movements between activities and environments
- assessments were carried out on the spot by a range of direct techniques selected from those listed above
- assessments were interspersed with information giving and review sessions
- similar types of activity were used for a range of purposes

28 During this first week, a high level of support and guidance was provided in order to help trainees acquire confidence and familiarise themselves with new routines and methods of learning. Also, for trainees entering the Broad Employment Skills strand, certain adjustments in assessment techniques were made to reflect the different nature of the strand. Trainees in this strand were either undecided as to their eventual occupational preference or low achieving - sometimes they belonged to both categories - and the Scheme's programme for both groups was described as being 'broad'. This meant two things. First, since many were undecided, their learning was to take place in a wider selection of vocational areas (up to 5) than was the case in the other strands, training in each area being, however, occupationally specific in its emphasis. Consequently, the induction period needed to include a substantial skills sampling element to enable staff and trainees to explore trainees' strengths, interests and needs in a variety of occupational areas. Second, when a trainee was perceived as being low achieving, it was anticipated that he/she would benefit from emphasis upon the acquisition of basic skills necessary for progress (see also paras 30 and 92 (ii)).

29 The Broad Employment Skills strand therefore had a distinct form of induction comprising three main sections :

i) a 'taster' section in which trainees tried every available skill area

ii) an industrial visits section

iii) a 'dry-run' of the trainee's expected timetable allocations

The 'taster' section aimed to give trainees firsthand experience of the skills they would learn in each activity. This was necessary because many were very vague concerning the activities involved in different areas of employment. The industrial visits section was intended to give them the opportunity of observing in workplaces the performance of skills they had been trying out. The dry run was to give them the opportunity of testing their selection of activities so that changes could be made if necessary.

30 As a result of observations made during the 'tasters', approximately 30 per cent of trainees in the Broad Employment Skills strand were given a basic skills test. This was a test devised by the National Foundation for Educational Research in basic literacy and numeracy. Those who scored a basic reading age below 10 and could not cope with simple numeracy were allocated to 'extra help' in basic skills sessions on a withdrawal basis from their sets. Withdrawal for 'extra help' was not, however, restricted to trainees in Broad Employment Skills but was available to those in all sets who were in need. It also took place on a voluntary basis, was accompanied by guidance and support and did not separate those involved from their sets, which remained integrated for the large part of the training week.

Trainee Aspirations : The Induction Questionnaire

31 Analysis of the questionnaire completed by trainees during induction helped staff both to confirm some existing perspectives and to identify needs which had not hitherto been recognised or had only been suspected. Sometimes it was possible for insights to have an immediate bearing on the curriculum; at other times they helped to create awareness of needs which staff worked to accommodate either during the pilot year or during planning and implementation

of the programme for the second year. These points are explored following analysis in the six areas listed in paragraph 33. Tables referred to in the analysis are to be found in appendix one.

32 The information obtained was of two main kinds :

i) that which had a substantial factual basis (e.g. on sex and ethnic origin). Where this was the case the results were collated and are presented in the form of tables;

ii) that which was of a more subjective nature as the questions required a personal response. When this kind of question was asked the analysis was in the form of trends.

33 The responses provided insights in six areas :

i) occupational aspirations in relation to sex, parental and sibling occupations

ii) occupational aspirations in relation to ethnic origin

iii) aspirations in relation to some aspects of the educational backgrounds of trainees

iv) trainees' expectations of the training environment; this was closely associated with (iii)

v) trainees' knowledge of and attitude towards the world of work

vi) trainees' conceptions of the guidance and counselling they had received during their school years

Area 1 : Sex, Parental and Sibling Occupations

34 In Table 1 the distribution of trainees according to sex and occupational area chosen in the programme is shown.* The patterns here were clear and pronounced, trainees chose

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* Data and analysis in area 1 (tables 1-4) are based on the first (September) intake of trainees. Analysis within the remaining five areas is based on both intakes (see paras 11 and 12).

occupational areas traditional for males and females. The extreme examples of this trend were in engineering and construction on the one hand and business and office skills on the other, where choices resulted in certain groups being entirely male and female respectively. Textiles - a major local industry - was chosen by only one male, while science and technology was chosen by only one female. It was interesting, however, that in retail and distribution and computer applications there was an equal interest by male and female trainees.

35 Table 2 suggests that fathers working in the traditional areas of engineering, retail and to a lesser extent business and office work had an influence on trainees' choices, although it was only in engineering that a strong correlation between parental occupation and trainee choice appeared. However, about two-thirds of the fathers who worked were concentrated in the areas of business and office, retail, engineering and construction work. Only about a quarter of mothers had jobs and these were employed mainly in retail and distribution or office work, which may have had some influence on the number of females choosing these areas. The latter possibility is strengthened by the findings displayed in Table 3, which shows that two-thirds of sisters were concentrated in the areas of retail/ distribution and office work. Where brothers were concerned, the majority were in occupations similar to those of their fathers.

36 Table 4, which indicates vocational aspirations, confirms the suggestions made above : a substantial number of males aspired towards engineering or construction and a substantial number of females towards business and office or caring.

Area 2 : Ethnic Origin

37 Analysis was based on the following data and on data provided by Bedfordshire County Council (not produced in full here) relating to numbers of ethnic minorities in Bedfordshire schools.

38 A number of interesting patterns were observed. First, the total proportion of trainees belonging to ethnic minorities who joined the Scheme was approximately the same as the total proportion of members of the Borough of Luton eligible to apply for entry during 1982. Thus, the total number of ethnic minority members of fifth forms within the borough in January 1982 was 510 of a total of 2,867 pupils (17.8%) while the comparable numbers entering the Scheme (Table 5) were 87 trainees from ethnic minorities out of a final total intake of 474 (18.4%).

39 This pattern was almost identical to that emerging from an analysis of the white Caucasian members of the Borough eligible for entry to the Scheme. In January 1982, there were 2,357 white fifth form pupils in the schools out of a total of 2,867 (82.2%) and of these 387 were accepted into the Scheme. As a percentage of 474 trainees this was 81.6%.

40 It thus emerged that the proportion of ethnic minorities eligible to enter the Scheme was very close to the proportion of ethnic minority trainees as a percentage of the total number of trainees and that these proportions were repeated among white pupil/trainees. Among the eligible school population the proportion of ethnic minorities was just under one fifth, which is close to their representation on the Scheme. The comparable proportions of Caucasians were about four-fifths among fifth formers and the same as a proportion of the total accepted into the Scheme.

41 Second, the numbers of trainees from ethnic minorities within each training strand were generally in proportion to their numbers on the Scheme as a whole. It can be deduced from Table 5 that the percentages within each strand were : 21.4% in Human and Creative; 19.2% in Manufacturing and Processing; 12.5% in Business and Information; 20.8% in Broad Employment Skills. These proportions are reasonably close to the 18.5% of ethnic minority trainees mentioned above.

42 Third, the total number of trainees from ethnic minorities (87) joining the Scheme was substantial, having implications which are discussed in the conclusions at the end of this section.

43 Fourth, the distribution of ethnic minority males and females among strands suggests a similar trend to that found among white Caucasian trainees. Thus Manufacturing and Processing attracted more males and in Business and Information the trend was reversed.

Area 3 : Educational Background

44 What emerged in this area was simple yet important. As Table 6 shows, the majority of trainees had been routed along traditional academic paths towards CSE or 'O' level examinations. Data relating to the number of passes gained in examinations was copious and yet also thought to be unreliable since, as was apparent from conversations with staff during recruitment and induction, many trainees simply did not know their examination results. Because trainees' attitudes towards examinations and the education they had received at school had a major bearing on the Scheme's aims, this subject is discussed at some length at the end of the section.

Area 4 : Expectations of the Training Environment

45 Responses concerning trainees' perceptions of the difference between school and the training environment (Table 7) demonstrate a high degree of disaffection with school and the hope of something different from the programme. Comments made to staff during recruitment confirmed the prevalence of these sentiments. In response to the questionnaire trainees said that :

- they could see virtually no relationship between what they had learned at school and their eventual vocations
- they wanted the work experience and training which would help them to find work

* whereas at school they had been treated like children, on the Project they wanted to be treated as adults, with more independence and less external discipline

Area 5 : The World of Work

46 Responses to the questionnaire provided a number of insights into trainees' awareness of the world of work. About 46% of trainees had had part-time jobs while at school, mainly through newspaper and milk delivery rounds, working in fast food establishments and shop work. From this, or from relatives, friends, careers teachers and the media, they had acquired some conception of the world of work. In particular, they had defined ideas as to what they would have to demonstrate to employers when seeking employment, nearly all trainees mentioning ability, capacity for hard work and a willingness to learn. They also thought that once they were in work, employers would respond to them favourably if they behaved like adults and applied themselves diligently.

47 Beyond awareness of the need for ability and positive attitudes, their knowledge was vague. They knew little about : the routines of the workplace (e.g. timekeeping); relationships at work, including those between peers, workers of different ages and between supervisor and worker; the rights of employees in relation to the rights of employers; the role of trade unions; health and safety; security; job satisfaction.

Area 6 : Guidance and Counselling

48 A number of responses indicated that, prior to recruitment, many trainees had been relatively unaware of either the spread of occupational areas available to them or whether their aptitudes fitted them for their preferences. Table 8 shows that a number (26%) relied entirely on relatives and friends for advice. Only about a fifth had been counselled, or thought they had been counselled, by either a careers officer or a teacher in school and a large number (42%) supplied no information concerning sources of advice,

suggesting considerable initial uncertainty and confusion. This latter tendency was confirmed by impressions of staff interviewing during recruitment, long discussions frequently being necessary to explain the array of options available and to counsel as to their suitability.

Conclusions and Implications for the Scheme

49 These are described and discussed under the six areas which provided the basis for the analysis of trainees' responses.

Area 1 : Sex, Parental and Sibling Occupations

50 There were undoubtedly factors other than the occupations of parents and siblings influencing occupational choice, the most important of these others being advice offered by the Careers Service, counselling received by trainees during recruitment and trainees' belief acquired through other media that jobs existed in certain occupational areas. Whatever effect such factors had, however, this clearly did not change ingrained assumptions concerning occupational areas which were proper for males and females. Thus, even in an area where trainees generally believed that jobs were available, such as business and office, the choice was predominantly female.

51 The approach taken by counsellors during recruitment was to explain the possibilities afforded across a range of occupational areas and yet to support aspirations which were strongly held, providing the trainee's aptitude was likely to be adequate in meeting the demands of the area. At this early stage staff did not feel equipped to challenge existing patterns of choice by influencing trainees to enter areas they might not consider 'suitable' for their sex. Otherwise, change was seen as being long-term, depending on external factors such as perceptions of employers and needing to take place in the context of a strong Equal Opportunities policy.

Area 2 : Ethnic Origin

52 A number of conclusions were drawn. First, the analysis of patterns of entry to the Scheme conducted in paragraphs 38-40 both suggested that the desire for training and subsequent employment among ethnic minority school-leavers in the Borough of Luton was as strong as that among a comparable population of white school-leavers and confirmed the Scheme's policy of open access.

53 Second, that the numbers of trainees from ethnic minorities within each training strand was in proportion to their numbers on the Scheme as a whole, suggesting that they were attracted by the same range of occupational areas as were white trainees. This was regarded by staff as being encouraging.

54 Third, that the male/female distribution in occupational areas was similar to that among white trainees, suggesting - as a broad generalisation - that members of minority groups were affected by the same traditional assumptions concerning the work appropriate for males and females as were white trainees.

55 Fourth, that the number of trainees from ethnic minorities on the Scheme was substantial had two major implications. The first related to the nature of the curriculum. Staff were aware that the organisation of learning should reflect the multi-ethnic nature of the Scheme's trainee membership. Although this was the case, no general initiatives were taken to raise the level of awareness among staff concerning multi-ethnic issues, or to implement a curriculum reflecting such issues. Initiatives were, however, taken by individual tutors; the most notable of these was the inclusion of English as a Second Language by two tutors as a dimension of training in basic skills (see para. 92 (iii)).

56 Also, it was considered necessary to attempt to prevent any discrimination which might be apparent both during the selection of trainees by employers for planned work experience and during placements (see para. 118).

Area 3 : Educational Background of Trainees

57 Two main points emerged. The first concerned the kind of assessment which had taken place at school. This had been of a 'normative' nature, designed to fail large numbers; rather than 'criterion-based'. This observation was not, of course, new; it confirmed the statement frequently made during recent years concerning the need for forms of assessment which describe what a learner 'can do' in a range of activities rather than focusing on the distribution of 'passes' and 'fails'. Such a system, it is often remarked, lowers the confidence and motivation of low achievers and even for those who pass says little of their abilities outside the narrow framework of examination assessment. The second point concerned the relative lack of practical learning which had taken place at school. This had generally been knowledge- and subject-based, providing little scope for the discovery and exercise of practical competence.

58 Not surprisingly - and as the two case studies below suggest - these two issues tended to become intertwined in the perceptions of trainees. Dissatisfied with the curricula they had been presented with at school, their frustration was frequently compounded by further failure in the normative assessments imposed by traditional examinations.

59 Since the Scheme was fundamentally a training programme in practical skills, and assessment aimed to describe what a learner 'could do', it was possible to respond directly to most of the anxieties reflected in the statements of trainees described above. In some areas trainees did take external examinations (e.g. in typing and computer skills) but entrance was through discussion with the tutor and always finally voluntary.

60 As the programme progressed, trainees were able to put their earlier educational experience into some perspective. Following discussions of this subject, several trainees wrote down their reflections, the following unedited comments being typical of their views. (Both trainees quoted took a range of GCE 'O' level and CSE examinations

before leaving school at 16).

Trainee No 1

61 'When I first started the course I was pleased there were no exams to be taken and no worry. It made me feel that it would be more of an office working situation rather than a school system where exams have to be taken.

62 'But now I realise that it would be a waste if there were no exams. I have learnt different skills and knowledge of accounts, typing etc. I find that the exam certificate is useful to show the work which I have achieved. The exams are going to be easier to take because there is no pressure involved in taking them.

63 'Exams can also be an advantage as you have something to show. The employer when being interviewed always asks what exams you are going to take at the completion of the course. On application forms they always include a space for exams taken.

64 'Therefore these exams would be an asset in finding a job which requires the skills you have learnt'.

Trainee No 2

65 'I could have had second thoughts about joining the course knowing that there were examinations to be taken at the end for definite. The course was supposed to be mostly concerned with teaching trainees a skill of some sort, the fact that exams had to be taken at the end would, I think, have been too much like school and put off people from joining. The pressures and nagging would probably have been the same as at school.

66 'Joining the course and studying this way enables trainees to reach a personal standard and be capable of taking an examination if they wish. They are under no obligation to sit it. The working areas are more relaxed and the pressures are off, letting people work at their own speeds

to achieve their own aims. Also, it is now possible to see how an examination certificate can help you. It shows the employer that you understand the subject even if you fail an examination it shows you are willing to work to reach a certain standard'.

67 These rich comments show clearly the trainees' disaffection with the school examination system, which both associated with an unwanted 'pressure'. Neither trainee condemned examinations per se. If the examinations had tested practical skills, if these had been learned in a congenial working environment and if the taking of the exam had been voluntary, then such assessment would have been welcomed as an opportunity to show an employer what the taker could do. Trainee 2 was quite keen on the idea of being assessed to standards, providing these were personally applied and that people were allowed to 'work at their own speeds to achieve their own aims'.

68 At the time the questionnaire was completed, observations made by trainees were not as articulate as the comments above and tended to convey a general disaffection with the examination process as it had been administered at school, coupled with a hope of something more helpful from training and work. The Scheme's response to their concerns is a main feature of this report.

Area 4 : Expectations of the Training Environment

69 The kinds of comments (see paras 45, 61ff) made by trainees were certainly not interpreted by staff as validating the training programme and condemning school. Clearly much of what had been learned at school was of potential use during training, in work experience and in subsequent employment.

70 Trainees' comments were made, moreover, at the beginning of the programme and hence before they had had adequate time to take stock of the demands which would be made on them, including the need for discipline, during training. As the programme progressed, for instance, they realised that 'negotiation' could not mean that a trainee had complete

freedom to pursue whatever direction he or she might initially wish, but that it necessarily implied recognition of the need for compromise, a balancing of interests and hence of restriction.

71 In general, although staff tended to be circumspect in their reception of early statements of expectation, they took them seriously as an indication of feelings expressed by young people during this transitional phase in their lives. In particular, staff awareness that for many trainees their learning at school seemed not to have taken place in a manner which demonstrated its relevance to life after school reinforced their commitment to ensure that learning on the Scheme was 'relevant'.

Area 5 : The World of Work

72 The findings reinforced the anticipation of staff that the programme would need to emphasise the importance of acquiring awareness in the range of areas where it was lacking. This became a major dimension of the programme, being incorporated in training by both tutors and counsellors as 'core' learning. The role that counselling played is discussed in more detail at the beginning of chapter three.

Area 6 : Guidance and Counselling

73 It was evident that trainees had either had little guidance and counselling prior to entering the Scheme or, if they had received this, had gained little in terms of knowledge of available occupations or of their own aptitudes. These findings, together with other insights, reinforced the determination of staff to evolve a programme of learning in which both guidance and counselling played a major part.

The Formation of the Curriculum During Training

74 This section describes the formation of the training curriculum in response to trainee needs and aspirations during the first two off-the-job phases of the programme.

75 The necessary information was obtained from analysis of a questionnaire completed by tutors towards the end of the first period of work experience (appendix two); from interviews of tutors after the completion of the programme; from discussions with all trainees after their first work experience, during the course of the programme and during the second work experience; and from observation of numerous group activities by one of the project researchers.

76 Some good indications of tutors' general conception of the purpose of the scheme occurred as responses to the question 'What is the Foundation Year Scheme trying to achieve?' on the questionnaire (appendix two). Some typical ones were :

'An integrated, planned, training programme for 16-18-year-olds in skills that will give balanced skill training for the individual and local industry'

'To give vocational training and experience; facilitation of the school/work transition'

'Develop character and maturity'

'To make the average young person who is leaving school more useful and hence more attractive to employers'

Methods

77 The means employed by tutors in the formation of the curriculum included :

* the demonstration of skills
* the provision of realistic contexts within which skills were practised - simulation was used extensively
* the provisions of contexts which encouraged trainees to find out how to perform new skills or to perform familiar skills in unfamiliar contexts
* the provision of learning situations which allowed trainees :

i) to recognise the necessity of appropriate knowledge if a skill was to be performed effectively

ii) access to methods for acquiring relevant knowledge

* the presentation of contexts which showed the inter-related nature of skills - project work was used extensively by tutors as an aid to integration
* a continuous programme of guidance and counselling
* regular reviewing to aid awareness, self-assessment and personal development
* constant emphasis on the rules, culture and practices of the workplace

78 The need for an awareness of employers' requirements was an important concern throughout the programme. Since this recognition determined both tutors' and trainees' orientation towards the programme, this major influence on the curricula of the Scheme is discussed prior to an examination of the curricula themselves.

Liaison with Employers

79 Before the programmes started, counsellors and other staff visited employers who had agreed to participate. The initial purpose of a visit was to introduce the employer to the Scheme and in so doing to emphasise the importance of the prospective work experience being properly planned and of a high quality. They then negotiated the nature of the placement being offered. This was important since it was necessary to clarify the scope of the placement and to form a precise idea of the levels of performance expected so that trainees could be carefully matched to placements and prepared for them.

80 At this stage priority was given to forming a working relationship with employers. In some cases it was possible to negotiate a detailed programme; in most instances the agreement reached was of a more general nature. Particular attention was paid to the attitude of the employer towards

the trainees' prospective presence in the workplace; it was accepted in many instances that the trainees' labour would be useful to the employer, yet at the same time it was essential to ensure that a range of training experiences of an appropriate standard would be provided.

81 During the early weeks of the off-the-job training and during the first placement, tutors as well as counsellors visited the workplaces of trainees for whom they were responsible. This allowed them to check that their own training was proceeding along the right lines and, where the visit occurred during a placement, to discuss with the employer the relationship between the work being done in the workplace and in the off-the-job training. All tutors observed that such visits were particularly useful during the first part of the programme.

82 However, the fact of both counsellors and tutors liaising with employers was immediately seen as problematic; there was a degree of friction between the two groups arising from uncertainty concerning the specific nature of their respective roles and it was felt that the process of liaison might become confusing for employers if there was more than one 'first' point of contact. Consequently it was decided that counsellors should provide the first contact and that when they, tutors or employers, thought it desirable they should arrange for tutor visits to the work placement. This arrangement was quickly seen as enhancing the overall effectiveness of liaison, the clarification of procedures ensuring that the interests of trainees, tutors, employers and counsellors could be met.

The Effect of Liaison on the Curriculum

83 Whether visits to workplaces had been made by counsellors or by tutors, the information obtained was of immense value in enabling tutors to proceed effectively. Tutors and counsellors observed that :

i) visits led to modifications in the content of the curriculum, for example :

(a) a tutor in the science and technology area introduced practice in the handling of simple telephone calls after discovering that a trainee working in a laboratory was considered by the employer to be deficient in this skill;

(b) in the Broad Employment Skills strand, wood skills, not originally included in the curriculum, was added during the second period of off-the-job training when it was found that acquisition of these skills would be beneficial to trainees in their second placement;

ii) for some tutors, visits confirmed that they were already proceeding along the right lines and they therefore made no modifications;

iii) occasionally the skills acquired by trainees during the off-the-job training were too 'advanced' for the placement. As an example, one employer, who expected to train only in basic forms of food preparation was surprised (pleasantly) that his trainees were adept not only in elementary processes but also in the preparation of such 'advanced' dishes as lasagne. When this happened the tutor noted the danger of creating unrealistic levels of expectation in trainees and took care during day-release training and during the second period of off-the-job training to emphasise the primary importance of acquiring elementary occupational skills;

iv) visiting more than one workplace revealed differences in the expectations of employers in fundamental areas. A tutor in the business and office set, for instance, noticed that employers tended to have different understandings of the meaning of 'accurate timekeeping'; she proceeded to incorporate her observation of this and other such differences of attitude into her training to help increase her trainees' awareness of differences between workplaces;

v) many staff observed that competence in interpersonal skills was considered very important by employers and

were therefore careful to emphasise this area in their training;

vi) visits made staff aware of mismatches where they occurred and enabled them quickly to identify the reasons for them. In the area of Manufacturing and Processing, for instance, they most often occurred because of inadequate basic skills such as the ability to communicate effectively on the telephone. Sometimes the cause related to personality or a lack of certain interpersonal skills; one tutor discovered, for instance, that one trainee was often upset because she was unable to appreciate the sense of humour of those with whom she worked in an office. In instances such as these the contribution of the tutor was seen as being invaluable; what was initially an unpleasant experience could often be improved by a tutor helping a trainee during day-release training sessions to acquire the capacity to cope with the situation. On occasions such as this, constructive intervention prevented a potential mismatch from becoming a real one.

84 As has been suggested in some of the above observations, tutors and counsellors were often able to use day-release training sessions to help trainees solve problems which had become apparent during visits (the process corresponds well to the FEU Experience, Reflection, Learning model*). Initially, some trainees were critical of the day-release training sessions, not on account of their content but because they felt they were a distraction from their involvement in the workplace.

85 However, despite initial reservations, the majority eventually felt they had benefited from day-release training, particularly where tutors and counsellors had assisted them in remedying difficulties they had encountered in the workplace.

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* Experience, Reflection, Learning. FEU. 1979

The Integrated Curriculum

86 This discussion of the integrated curriculum starts with a diagram designed to explain the structure of the learning process as this evolved during the Scheme's operation. As such it necessarily incorporates the trainees' work experience and looks forward to Chapter three of the report in which the topic of work-based learning is considered.

87 The description of the diagram uses the word 'integration' in two different ways (these correspond to the separate meanings the word possesses in much current discussion of training in YTS). The two meanings are :

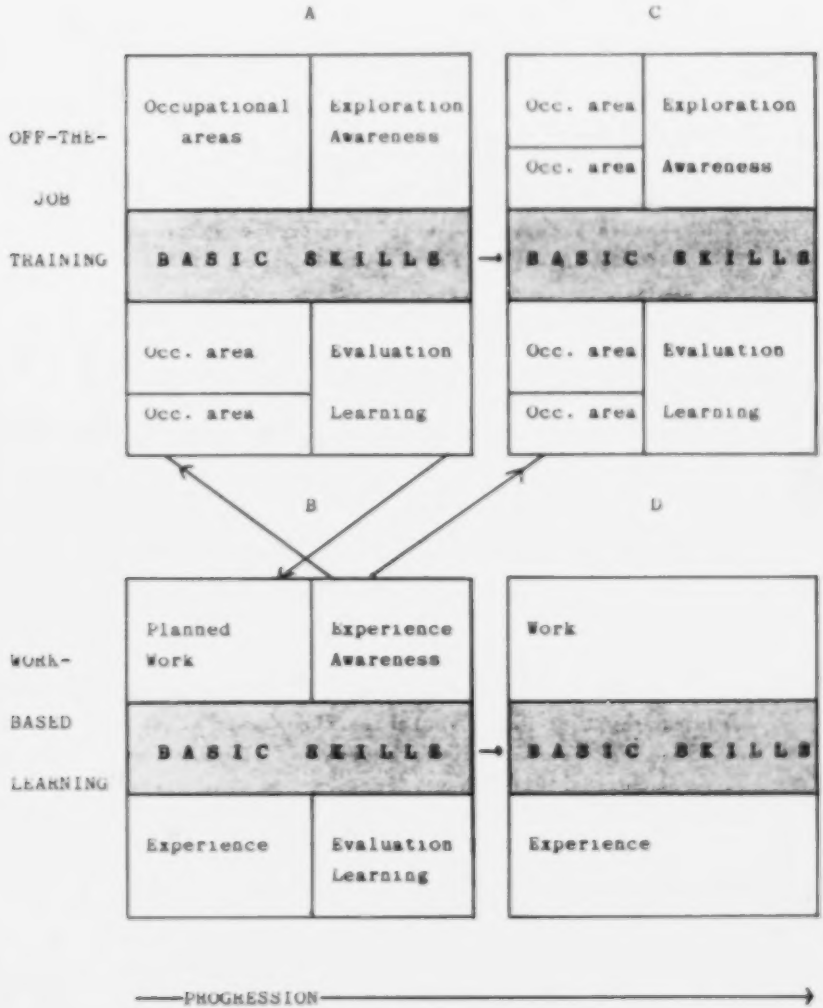
i) integration of occupational skills with basic skills
ii) the integration of off-the-job training with learning in the workplace

'Basic skills' were understood by staff as including : written and spoken skills, graphical skills, numerical skills, sensory skills, computerised communication (where this was appropriate). It will be noticed that the list above differs from the list of five core areas published by the MSC in 1982. This is because the planning of the Scheme pre-dated the publication of guidance for core areas for YTS by the MSC. 'Written and spoken skills', 'numerical skills' and 'computerised communication' do, however, correspond to three of the core areas listed by the MSC, while 'sensory skills' includes the MSC's 'manual dexterity' but was intended also to encompass relevant aspects of health and safety. Also, although problem solving and planning are not mentioned in the list they were recognised as being important and influenced many aspects of the curriculum.

88 Also, irrespective of their chosen specialism, all trainees developed competence in the following areas, which were described as 'life skills' : computing and technology, machinery and equipment, office and clerical skills, the properties and uses of materials (within and outside industrial settings), social and caring techniques. Life skills were not timetabled to be learned at specific times

during a training week; the above formed a check-list, individual areas being incorporated where this was appropriate. In this respect, both basic skills and life skills were seen as dimensions of the integrated curriculum.

A Diagram Representing the Integrated Curriculum



89 The main features of the diagram are :

i) The top and bottom sections within the boxes correspond to the phases of training and planned work-experience in the programme.

ii) Box A is designed to show the structure of training within the first period of off-the-job training. The left side of the box is divided into sections in order to illustrate the possibility of training taking place in one or several occupational areas (as was the case in the Broad Employment Skills strand).

iii) The shaded section of the box indicates the centrality of basic skills in the programme. These were understood as integrating with specific occupational skills in two main ways. First, the learning of basic skills was seen as necessarily occurring simultaneously with the learning of occupational skills as related aspects of the integrated curriculum. Second (as is illustrated in para. 92 (ii)) it was apparent that progress in learning could not take place unless appropriate levels of competence in basic skills relevant to the task had been achieved. Ownership of appropriate basic skills was, therefore, seen as essential at all levels of performance and could not be equated with lower level skills. This observation corresponds to that made in the FEU publication Basic Skills* as part of the discussion of the Model 'A Framework for Progression' (Basic Skills).

iv) The right of Box A indicates the phases which were seen as essential for progression. During the Foundation Year Scheme 'exploration' was viewed as occurring mostly during the initial weeks of the programme, when the individual trainee had the opportunity of 'trying out' a number of occupational areas before settling in one or, as was so in the Broad

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* Basic Skills. FEU, 1982.

Employment Skills strand, a combination of areas. The presence of 'awareness' in the box reflects the importance attached to both profiling and counselling during the programme.

v) In Box B, basic skills retain their centrality in the learning process since they were as important, if not more important, during planned work-experience as during off-the-job training. In the left of the box, 'Work Experience' replaces the range of occupational areas indicated in Box A since work placements generally required a firm commitment within an occupational area. It is for the same reason that 'experience' replaces 'exploration', although the latter was certainly not seen as lacking in many work placements.

90 The lines and arrows linking Box A and Box B indicate connections it was hoped the individual would make between training and planned work experience. These are a central feature of both of the main focuses of this report. In general, it was hoped that the learning occurring during training would influence an individual trainee's approach to, and ability to cope with, his/her planned work experience and that the learning occurring in the workplace would make it possible to reflect upon the training which had already taken place and would influence the trainees' orientation towards the next phase of training. Again this process corresponds in some fundamental ways to the learning model described in the FEU publication Experience, Reflection, Learning.

91 Further connections, introducing further elements of complexity, could be made between Boxes B, C and D, (C and D representing further periods of off-the-job training and planned work experience respectively).

Implementation of the Integrated Curriculum

92 The diagram described above attempts to convey the sense of structure which guided staff in their planning of learning experiences. We do not wish to suggest that the

curricula of the four strands were implemented easily and without complication. Some observations made by tutors show that practice brought to light a number of difficulties as well as successes :

i) The integration of communication, numeracy and manipulative skills with specific occupational skills worked well. In the specific strands, tutors incorporated these basic skills 'in medias res' and as the need arose. Indeed, competence in basic skills was seen as being so essential to the ownership of specific occupational skills that for tutors and trainees alike the separation would have been almost meaningless. A simple example is that competence in business calculations and literacy was essential to the effective carrying out of a range of office practices in the business and office area.

ii) As has been already mentioned (para. 30), where trainees experienced difficulty in literacy and numeracy, withdrawal was used in order to allow concentrated practice. However, these basic skills were not isolated from contexts where they were likely to occur in 'real life' but were learned alongside the practice of life skills and vocational skills. Thus, although withdrawal allowed a greater concentration on important basic skills, the approach remained functional and hence focused on relevant usages.

iii) In some sets where there were trainees from ethnic minorities with language needs, English as a Second Language (ESL) was included. As was the case with trainees who were withdrawn from their sets, learning was not of a formal nature but was related to occupational interests and to the acquisition of competence in social and life skills. The inclusion of ESL in the programme was thus seen as a form of positive redress.

iv) Sometimes tutors assumed competence in trainees where this did not exist. An illustration was provided by a tutor in catering who found that she had to adjust her

approach after discovering that she could not take for granted the capacity to clean vegetables or fruit, awareness of their size or a knowledge of the names of basic produce such as brussel sprouts. The tutor related this kind of initial problem to her own lack of awareness of the background of some trainees (for example, that some households consume few vegetables), rather than to the 'ability' of her trainees. When tutors encountered this kind of problem it was easy to modify approaches to ensure coverage of the skills necessary for progression.

v) The identification of elementary difficulty frequently opened up horizons rather than closing them. An illustration of this occurring was provided by the same trainer in catering. Having recognised that her trainees found it difficult to comprehend the sheer size of a side of beef, she arranged a visit to a butcher where they were able to observe the initial stages of the process by which the side of beef reaches the plate.

vi) During the first period of training, trainees were often unrealistic in their expectations of work. Occurrences of lack of realism were numerous : trainees wanting to be 'high status cooks' and trainees failing to appreciate the amount of dirt involved in routine engineering tasks were two examples. The strategy generally adopted by tutors to cope with such lack of realism was to introduce trainees as soon as possible to the tasks they thought they would find unpalatable; for example, an early task set by a tutor in engineering was to drain and remove an engine sump.

vii) In retrospect, staff realised it was inevitable that some trainees making the transition from school to work would have unrealistic expectations and decided that in future years techniques should be devised for detecting them at an early stage. During the pilot year, however, the relatively late discovery of some instances of lack of realism rarely provided insurmountable barriers; in

time, both off-the-job training and work placements gave trainees the opportunity of testing their expectations against reality and of making adjustments.

viii) Trainees joining the Scheme did not generally see it as 'second best' to acquiring qualifications in a college course; however, there was an interesting example of this occurring in applied design. A number of trainees had failed to gain entrance to a local college to study graphics and saw the Scheme as providing a period of preparation for reapplication to the college course. Two were eventually accepted while the remaining seven settled for starting work at a lower level than would have been possible with the college qualifications; all, whether they eventually progressed to college or not, realised that they enjoyed work.

ix) Sometimes there were initial behavioural problems. Since trainees had recently left school and had no experience of working full-time it was inevitable that they should behave as 'pupils' rather than as members of a partnership between adults. Such behavioural difficulty diminished or disappeared entirely as soon as staff had succeeded in communicating the nature of the relationship appropriate in the training programme; several tutors commented that once trainees understood that learning should be negotiated and participative, attitudes were immediately transformed. As an illustration of this observation, one tutor in the Broad Employment Skills strand who had emphasised the need for a negotiated and participative approach responded to the question which asked about change in attitude and behaviour : 'Openness has increased. The group identity is noticeably high on day-release - there is an increase in maturity'. In response to the question 'To what extent has this affected your concept as a tutor?', the same tutor wrote : 'It has revived my all-but-dead conviction that our relationship can be different from a teacher/pupil one'.

x) The development of a partnership in training was facilitated by setting up, with the assistance of a counsellor, a Trainee Association, an elected committee of trainees who sent representatives to Scheme Board meetings and in other ways negotiated a range of trainee issues with Scheme management.

xi) Occasionally tutors of specific vocational skills groups found that trainees who were having difficulty with literacy and numeracy initially possessed low motivation. One tutor perceived this as having occurred in a business and office group where a few trainees at first lacked sufficient competence in these basic skills to proceed at a comfortable speed in the acquisition of essential office skills. Where this difficulty was experienced it arose from one or a combination of :

- the tutor's lack of awareness as to how to cope with such special needs
- the tutor having insufficient time within the limits of group sessions to cater effectively for those with learning difficulties
- a trainee's feeling of inadequacy derived from poor past performance at school and a present inability to proceed as rapidly as the majority

These factors may be found associated with low motivation in any group where learners are of varying levels of competence at any one time. Where low motivation relating to any of the above factors was at first a problem, the situation was rapidly improved by tutors developing techniques for helping those with difficulties in basic skills and by the support provided to trainees through 'extra help' in withdrawal sessions (see para. 30).

93 Encouraging trainees to exercise familiar skills in new or unfamiliar situations was adopted by a large number of tutors as a conscious strategy in their devising of learning activities; an example of this was the learning of retail skills as transferable commodities in business. Although

the other tutors did not necessarily devise learning experiences with the express intention of promoting transfer, the process nevertheless was observable. As will be apparent from the discussion of integrated projects which follows, trainees were frequently required to practise familiar skills in unfamiliar circumstances. In the Scheme's pilot year, skill transfer was understood only in the sense of redeploying learned skills. Strategies for transfer implemented in a manner to raise trainees' conscious ownership of the skills of transfer were introduced later.

Learning through Integrated Projects

94 Project work was seen by all tutors as fundamental to the curriculum. In the broad strand it was conducted as part of the programme throughout the year, both during the periods of off-the-job training and on day-release, in order to provide an 'integrative element' to bring together the broad range of skills learned by trainees in this strand. In the specific strands the tendency was to introduce extended project work later in the programme although some tutors did introduce 'mini-projects' at an early stage. In July 1983, as an extension of the project idea, trainees from Broad Employment Skills also participated in a residential programme which was planned and managed by them, tutors assuming the role of consultants in the process.

95 The variety of competences exercised in project work was wide and a full list would include most of the learning aims considered desirable throughout the programme. Some prominent features of projects were :

* the scope and nature of their execution was often negotiated
* at the design stage, each project was tailored to the needs of the individual or the group, depending on the type of project
* problem solving played a major part
* integration of a range of skills was a central objective
* the transfer of skills already learned occurred frequently

- forward planning, self-organisation and an independent approach were essential to a successful outcome
- it was emphasised that trainees were responsible for the outcomes

96 There were three main types of project. First was the type which emphasised the process of 'finding out' and which required the exercise of appropriate basic skills towards this end. An example was a project undertaken by a trainee in caring which involved finding out about local play facilities.

97 Second, there was the type of project which depended on simulation of a 'real life' activity. An example of this was the simulation of the process of setting up a restaurant, conducted by trainees in catering. This involved finding a vacant building through an estate agent, deciding on the kind of restaurant and the planning and organisation of all aspects of this particular kind of small business.

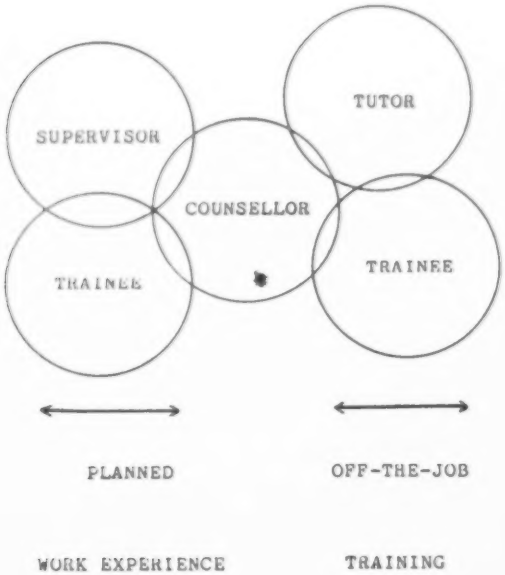
98 Third, certain projects could be characterised as 'real' as distinct from 'realistic' in that they were integrated entirely with 'real' life. An example was the popular project undertaken by trainees in the Broad Employment Skills strand which involved the overhauling of a van subsequently used extensively by the Centre. This operation necessitated mechanical work on the engine, the construction of benches, painting and wiring.

3. WORK-BASED LEARNING : PLANNED WORK EXPERIENCE AND ITS INTEGRATION WITH OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING

99 This chapter is concerned with two perspectives : the role of planned work experience in providing a basis for learning in the workplace and how the Scheme tried to integrate learning in the workplace with that occurring during off-the-job training. The first section looks at the role of counsellors, whose capacity to act as a bridge between tutors and supervisors was essential to the negotiation of planned work experience and to the process of integration. The second section examines the roles of employers and supervisors in implementing planned work experience and the third considers some issues associated with integration and is more speculative than descriptive.

The Role of Counsellors

100 This model demonstrates the centrality of counsellors :



'Supervisor' rather than 'employer' is designated in the model since it was the person occupying this role who was directly responsible for the trainee's learning, progress and personal welfare on a day-to-day basis.

The Job Description of Counsellors

101 The job descriptions for the counsellors' posts, which reflected their prospective roles as it was thought they would operate within the framework indicated by the diagram, show the importance which was attached to them from the outset. Their responsibilities were described as :

* to assist in devising principles of employer-Scheme relations and to take a major role in employer-Scheme liaison for work experience placements
* to advise Careers Service staff about trainees' progress and needs and the training being undertaken within the Scheme
* to liaise with colleagues to ensure the effective sharing of information
* to attend school functions (e.g. parents' evenings) to give information
* to plan and lead a programme of occupational guidance and job seeking
* to advise and assist teaching staff in respect of occupational guidance
* to assist in developing a bank of suitable learning materials for occupational guidance
* to assist in devising a personal guidance scheme and to take a share in its operation
* to take an active part in staff training and development measures, involving Careers Service staff as appropriate
* to participate in appropriate Careers Service meetings and working groups

102 Further, since there were no orthodox career paths leading to this post, the following experience, skills and attributes were sought :

* evidence of sustained study and attainment
* demonstrable commitment to the transitional needs of young people
* sound employment experience
* a specialist understanding, derived from formal study or experience, of young people's occupational or personal guidance needs, or of guidance techniques

103 As the programme progressed, most of the roles mentioned in the job description were developed by counsellors. In time, it was possible to see these as falling into three broad areas - those of liaison officer, teacher and provider of personal guidance and support.

As would be expected, these roles frequently overlapped. Further, since (as is suggested by the diagram above) the most general function of the counsellor was to make possible an integrated response to the concerns of tutors, supervisors and trainees, the role of liaison officer could be seen as including those of teacher and personal counsellor. Thus there was no situation in which teaching and personal counselling could be separated from the comprehensive process of liaison. Nevertheless, the provisional separation of the three roles provides a helpful framework for discussion.

Counsellors as Liaison Officers

104 In this role, counsellors assumed major responsibility in the following ways. Their first task was to introduce the scheme to supervisors who had agreed to participate in it. Many of them had participated in YOP and so this often provided a helpful starting point in discussions, although counsellors were careful to point out that the Youth Training Scheme would make more demand on employers than had YOP; in particular, they stressed the need for the planning of work experience and for regular assessment and recording of progress. Supervisors differed in their attitudes towards these elements. However (and since at this early stage it was necessary to ensure goodwill towards the Scheme), counsellors decided to develop attitudes and

awareness over a period of months as supervisors gained confidence in both trainees and the Scheme.

105 Counsellors were also responsible for matching a trainee's occupational interests, personality and capacity to a placement. This normally involved discussions with trainees, consultations with tutors and the careful selection of a placement from the options available. It was, of course, necessary for the counsellor to have identified the scope of a prospective placement before a final matching could take place. The counsellor then arranged interviews with each organisation and conducted a pre-interview with each trainee. Guidance and further details about the organisation in question were then given to the trainee.

106 Trainees attended singly or in groups, depending on the number of placements the employer was able to offer. It was expected that most trainees would secure an acceptance; the purpose of the interview was to present him or her with a 'real life' situation which would provide a learning experience. However, the interview was free of normal competitive elements of job interviews; each trainee was matched by employers at interview, not against other candidates, but against the placements' entry skill requirements. Thus each trainee understood the need to present himself or herself in a positive fashion to the interviewer.

107 At this stage, and at later stages, it was sometimes necessary to counsel the supervisor on the scope and level of training which would be suitable for the trainee and on the attitude it was hoped the supervisor would adopt in his/her relationship with the trainee. It was, for instance, sometimes necessary to reassure a supervisor that a trainee who lacked recognised qualifications nevertheless had the ability to cope with certain tasks providing that they were planned and carefully supervised.

108 Also, while counsellors were obviously eager to present the Scheme to supervisors as an attractive proposition, openness, particularly concerning the backgrounds and personal qualities of specific trainees, was considered essential to a constructive relationship being formed. Supervisors clearly appreciated this approach, which helped them to take a personal interest in trainees and plan realistic training programmes.

109 Having matched the trainee to a placement, the counsellor had to negotiate the learning agenda with the supervisor, paying special attention to the need for the work experience to be planned. As has been already noted above, in the early stages of the programme most supervisors provided a general framework and worked out details over a period of several weeks.

110 The placement then had to be monitored, which was achieved through visits approximately every three weeks. This process involved checking on a trainee's progress, negotiating changes in the learning agenda where it was apparent this was necessary (such as when there was a lack of variety or the level expected was too high or too low) and counselling trainees when there were problems and anxieties. Where the latter occurred, the day-release element in the programme proved particularly useful; it could be suggested to a trainee, for instance, that he/she 'wait until next Tuesday', when the problem could be discussed and explored with a counsellor or tutor in an environment free of the immediate pressures of the workplace.

111 Counsellors liaised constantly with tutors, with whom they had daily contact at the Centre. On account of their close involvement with trainees during off-the-job training, tutors were able to provide counsellors with information which could then be passed on to the supervisor; and counsellors were able to provide feedback to tutors which could be incorporated in training. Also, since counsellors were the primary source of contact with supervisors, they frequently arranged for tutors to visit placements which, as

has already been observed (para. 83), provided an invaluable source of insight for tutors in their planning of off-the-job training.

112 Through the means outlined above, counsellors were able to balance the interests of supervisors, tutors and trainees and aid the integration of supervisors' and tutors' contributions to the programme.

Counsellors as Teachers and Providers of Guidance and Support

113 Counsellors were not skilled instructors and not, as tutors were, directly responsible for the fashioning of the off-the-job curriculum. Nevertheless, the discussions they held with trainees in the workplaces on day-release and during the phases of off-the-job training assisted trainees to acquire a better understanding of the learning they had so far achieved and of their developmental needs, in relation to specific occupational competence and to the learning of essential social and life skills. An advantage possessed by counsellors in this teaching role was that they were likely to be familiar with needs which had recently become apparent in the workplace and so were in a position to respond immediately - where for instance it was necessary for a trainee to improve his/her ability in an aspect of social and life skills in order to cope with a certain situation. In this role counsellors worked in partnership with tutors and supervisors. Counsellors also served as a source of referral in situations where tutors or supervisors felt that they would be the best source of help, such as when personal problems for trainees became apparent. Some of these personal problems related directly to the training programme (e.g. anxiety concerning progress) and some were to an extent separate from it (e.g. difficulties with parents, accommodation, emotional problems). It was considered important to recognise the effect on progress likely to be caused by a disturbance to a trainee's emotional and mental state, whatever the cause.

114 It was on account of the counsellor's position in the structure of the scheme - separate from both tutors and

supervisors and yet liaising with both groups - that they were able to function as an impartial source of advice and direction and as providers of personal guidance and counselling as well as in the area of liaison discussed at the start of this section.

The Employers' Response

115 This section examines in more detail the employers' response to the scheme. However, since there was a large number of employers, this has had to be selective. Data was collected in the following ways :

i) through a total of 60 interviews conducted by one of the Project Researchers on employers' premises during the second period of off-the-job training. Firms chosen for the sample covered the full range of occupational sectors in which work experience took place, the numbers within each sector being in proportion to the total numbers of trainees on the Scheme within that sector. A range of sizes (by the number of employees) of firm was included; and several firms were visited because of their willingness to be particularly supportive of trainees considered to be less able. Those interviewed included managing directors, line managers, supervisors, instructors, foremen and personnel officers, the numbers of these depending on availability and their knowledge of the trainee. An Interview Guide was used for each visit and in some cases subsequent visits were made to clarify certain issues;

ii) from a sample of one-third (153) of the Assessments of Progress and Attainment provided to the Scheme at the end of the first work placement. The numbers of firms chosen within each occupational area were in proportion to the total number of trainees within the area, but selection was otherwise random;

iii) through informal conversations with staff who had negotiated work placements and/or visited trainees and

from report forms used for these occasions;

iv) from feedback from trainees obtained by a variety of means.

Attitudes of Employers towards the Scheme

116 It was evident from the reports of counsellors negotiating and visiting placements, from reports of trainees and from the attitudes displayed by employers and supervisors during the interviews that the large majority welcomed the idea of youth training and in time went to considerable lengths to provide work experiences which included variety, were conducted at appropriate levels and provided an introduction to the routines of the work place. Most were able to offer a sufficient quantity of learning activities meeting the necessary criteria to allow a trainee to return to the same placement after the second off-the-job training block and to progress without repetition of activities already covered; and there were some who were able to provide a smaller quantity of tasks which a trainee could be expected to master by the end of the first placement, after which learning would become repetitive. Where this occurred, the trainee was allocated an alternative placement, the one he/she had left being used for another trainee who could benefit from it.

117 There were a number of employers who, it seemed, were willing to provide a sound training, but who acted out of sense of community obligation, believing it their duty to 'help young people'. A further group used the placements as a probationary period during which they decided whether or not they wished to offer the trainee permanent employment.

118 Some employer attitudes were regarded by counsellors and other Scheme staff as being simply unacceptable. These included the occasional desire to use the Scheme as a source of cheap labour and occasional sexist or racist attitudes. Where any of these were apparent during preliminary discussion, the placement was simply not used; and where unacceptable attitudes became apparent only during the first period

of on-the-job training, then the placement was not used again. It was recognised by staff that at least some of the work done by the trainee should be useful to the employer; indeed, the ability to make a contribution in the workplace was seen as essential in the building of confidence and maintaining of motivation and was thus viewed as an important part of a trainee's development. The criterion used by counsellors was that usefulness should be consistent with constructive learning activity.

Planned Work Experience

119 A trainee's first personal contact with a firm was provided by the interview, arranged by counsellors, designed to provide experience in this aspect of seeking employment (see para. 106). Both reports from trainees and the interviews with employers and supervisors suggested that this event had been constructive and helpful for trainees; the interviews were managed so as to be 'realistic' and their conduct reflected a good response to early suggestions that criteria for acceptance for a placement should relate to suitability for the work in question rather than to standard academic strengths.

120 Supervisors had also been asked to provide a planned induction at the commencement of a trainee's placement. Few actually managed this in any sustained manner during the Scheme's first year although it was noted that those who did so - they tended to work in large companies and often used existing arrangements for apprentices - provided an induction of a very high quality. In most cases, however, the trainee was initially 'shown round' and induction then occurred as a gradual process.

121 The planning of a programme of learning activities by supervisors was regarded as being fundamental to the success of the whole Scheme. An indication of the range of tasks to be undertaken and the levels of performance to be expected were essential for :

- the matching to be reliable
- the learning to be effective
- the integration of learning in the workplace with learning in off-the-job training

It was because these dimensions of the scheme were so important that counsellors introduced the need for provision of a planned programme during early discussions with supervisors. The result of the discussions was that all supervisors provided at least a framework within which were designated the areas of work to be covered. The amount of detail and degree of precision with which learning activities were defined varied considerably from supervisor to supervisor. Since it had been decided to give priority to the establishing of a working relationship built on an employer's confidence in the Scheme, it was thought sensible to introduce the need for precise and structured planning by all supervisors over a period of time.

122 The attempt to integrate on- and off-the-job learning during the pilot year was regarded by Scheme staff as being moderately successful. Comments on confirmation sheets used to record the frameworks for planned work experience provided some helpful pointers; these were supplemented by observations made by counsellors and tutors during visits to the workplace and subsequently fed into the off-the-job curriculum. It was felt, however, that development within this area was possible and that this would depend on a variety of factors. These included :

i) the willingness of employers to devote necessary resources
ii) perceptions of training held by supervisors and tutors
iii) supervisors' awareness of the nature of the aims of YTS
iv) the availability of techniques for achieving integration

All of these factors are, of course, related also to the task of achieving planned work experience - without which integration is impossible. They are closely interrelated;

ii, iii and iv for instance, are all probably influenced by, and influence, willingness. The same is true of perception, the other factor in the list relating to attitude, and this is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Assessment of Progress and Attainment

123 As with the planning of work experience and integration, the introduction of a full system of asessment and profiling in the workplace demanding substantial time and expertise was not seen as feasible during the early stages of the relationship between supervisors and the Scheme. Therefore Scheme staff devised a form designed to be clear and concise while at the same time being comprehensive and inviting additional comments where the supervisor wished to make them (appendix 3).

124 Completion of a matrix ('Very Good' to 'Unacceptable' against various areas of activity) provided a good general impression as to a trainee's performance and acceptability in the workplace. The large majority of supervisors ticked the 'Good' or 'Average' sections in most areas, few ticks occurring in either the 'Very Good' or the 'Poor/ Unacceptable' boxes; this suggested that the performance of most trainees was broadly endorsed. It was understood that there was a considerable subjective element in this activity, determined by factors such as the varying standards in workplaces and whether the trainee was being assessed as a new entrant to work or in comparison with experienced workers. Individual assessments only became fully meaningful, therefore, when examined by counsellors and other staff in relation to a supervisor's standards and attitudes, this form of evaluation being quite possible by the time the first assessments were completed at the end of the first work placement.

125 Useful feedback was also supplied by supplementary comments made by supervisors, about half (75 out of 153) of the sample examined including detailed comments either alongside specific areas or at the end of the report. Apart from supplying useful appraisals of the performance of individual

trainees, these additional comments also provided some indications of the kinds of characteristics which supervisors providing training considered important.

- A high proportion (40 out of 75) making written comments) made observations relating to motivation and interest. Typical appraisals were e.g. 'keen to learn job skills'; 'has shown a willingness to work hard'. The way in which the word 'willing' was used frequently suggested the importance attached to responsiveness to co-workers as well as to application. Such endorsements were not restricted to trainees who had always worked effectively, a number of comments relating to improvements which had occurred during the period of the placement; 'slowish to start due no doubt to everything being new, but soon picked up' was a typical comment of this kind.

- Where analyses of specific abilities were attempted, they tended also to comment on motivation and interest, to indicate improvement which could be achieved through further training. Two examples will illustrate this trend :

  'Needs all the practice in soldering and harness/cable-forming he can get. These are not easy to acquire and need constant practice to achieve a good standard';
  'Shows definite signs of being able to discharge the responsibilities of a mechanic subject to the correct type of training'.

- Initiative and the ability to work alone were also rated highly. Illustrations were :

  'capable of working alone'
  'ability to find a job on own initiative'
  'quite often priorities change rapidly, but soon manages to adapt'

- In a number of instances, competence in communication was isolated as being either an asset or inadequate for the work being done. Examples were :

  'communicates well with staff and customers'
  'particularly good telephone manner'
  'his ability to express himself has improved in the past few weeks both in social and technical terms'

- Effectivenes in relationships, both within the workplace and with the public where this was relevant, emerged as being important. In some occupational areas (retail being an obvious example), interpersonal effectiveness was essential to competence in the tasks being performed. Nevertheless, many supervisors clearly appreciated a trainee being 'likeable', 'polite', 'cheerful' or 'pleasant', even though these characteristics may have had no direct relationship to the work being done.

126 As was the case with the completion of the matrix, comments such as those cited acquired fuller significance when they were understood within the wider context of the standards, attitudes and other requirements of the supervisor. Seen in this way they both provided insights into the performance of individual trainees and conveyed to Scheme staff a range of characteristics considered important by supervisors.

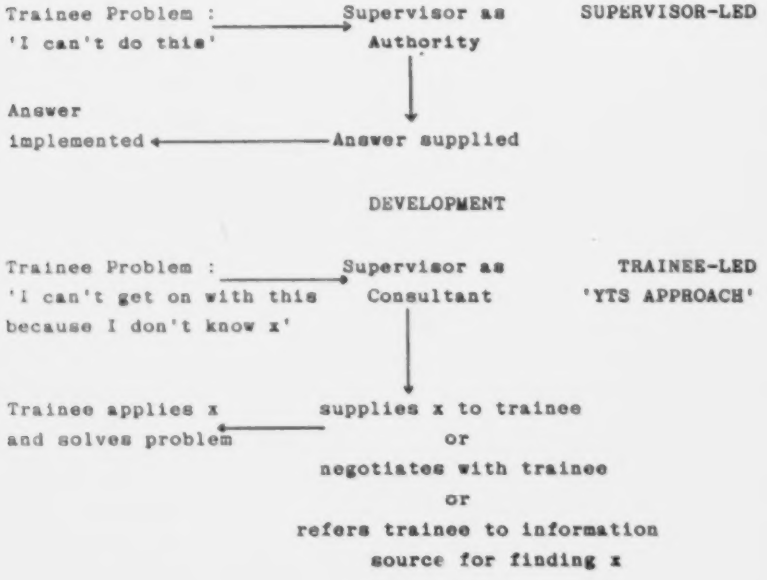
Supervisors' and Tutors' Perceptions of Training in Relation to YTS

127 Staff participating in the Foundation Year Scheme sometimes felt that co-operation between them and supervisors was affected by tutors and employers having different perceptions of training. Training in the workplace, it was sometimes observed, tends to be seen as the acquisition of vocational skills with an emphasis on practice in particular settings, the skills frequently being taught through instruction (much the same may be said of much educational practice). Concepts such as 'integrated learning', 'trainee

centred learning' and 'participative learning' tend to be alien to it. If such a difference does exist, then the question is whether YTS is to operate as a real partnership in which the approaches of supervisors and trainers are integrated or as an enterprise in which the participants simply work in parallel without close integration. This section examines the present situation and attempts to define differences, common ground and possible bases for development.

128 During the pilot year, staff observed that there were some basic differences of approach of supervisors and tutors, but that some aims supported by the 'YTS approach' were already practised by supervisors, but described differently. If this was true of the workplace, then differences in perception can be said to have depended on two factors : different uses of language and actual conceptual differences. Two models help to clarify these points : Model 1 demonstrates a solely conceptual difference.

MODEL 1



The difference between the two situations is considerable. In the supervisor-led part of the model the processes of finding out and exploration are minimal, although important skills are exercised (the trainee has to understand the answer supplied, for instance). On the other hand, in the trainee centred part of the model, a high degree of active participation is assumed; the trainee is able to define the kind of information he/she requires to solve the problem and resorts to the supervisor, who plays a consultative rather than directive role, allowing the trainee considerable independence in solving the problem.

MODEL 2

'SUPERVISOR' PERCEPTION		'YTS' PERCEPTION
'keen, willing to learn' 'capable of working alone'	→	attempts problem solving
'asks when in difficulty'	→	'can find out'
'able to adjust to work and situations that come along from day to day'	→	can transfer skills
'John has a tendency to do only what he is asked to do, but realises that he must take more interest in his surroundings in future'	→	effective learning is trainee centred and is aided by an awareness of working environment
'Sue now has a very saleable asset in computer experience particularly word processing'	→	trainee 'owns' certain computer skills
LANGUAGE/CONCEPT	→	LANGUAGE/CONCEPT
BASIS	→	DEVELOPMENT

129 Whereas Model 1 is hypothetical, Model 2 is based more firmly in the practice which tended to occur during the Scheme's work placements.

The comments on the left of the model are all taken from the Assessment of Progress and Attainment forms completed by supervisors. The difference between the 'supervisor' and 'YTS' perceptions is sometimes linguistic, but more often both linguistic and conceptual. The example at the bottom of the model represents a simple linguistic difference, both comments saying exactly the same thing in different words. 'Asks when in difficulty' and 'can find out' represents a linguistic difference in as far as the supervisor is endorsing an elementary form of 'finding out' (asking); the phrasing of the comment, however, also suggests that the supervisor might not endorse more independent forms of finding out which may or may not involve the supervisor.

130 The experience of the Foundation Year Scheme was that the existing situation is closer to that represented in Model 2. The comments made by supervisors in assessing trainees and the positive attitude shown by many to the idea of extensive co-operation suggested that even where there were conceptual differences, these tended not to be absolute. As an indication of this, an encouraging development during the work placements was that an increasing number of supervisors began to set trainees projects and to discuss the outcomes with them. Also, a number of supervisors began to involve trainees in placement assessments - an experience very much appreciated by trainees. Such positive indications suggested that supervisors were likely to be receptive to the introduction of initiatives designed to further integration in YTS schemes in the County.

4 THE FOUNDATION YEAR SCHEME IN A LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY CONTEXT

Introduction

131 The report so far has attempted to describe the Foundation Year Scheme in relation to the two sections of the FEU remit. In so doing it has tried to define the areas of strength and limitation which governed our reference to the Scheme as a model for subsequent youth training developments within Bedfordshire. Chapter three has started to define some of the ground which has served as a basis for development work throughout the County. This is now taken forward in paragraphs 152 to 159, after which there is a brief consideration of the broader significance of the Scheme for the Bedfordshire LEA.

Work-Based Learning

132 It has been suggested (para. 122) that the possibility of achieving planned work experience and integration in youth training is affected by :

- the willingness of employers to devote necessary resources
- perceptions of training held by supervisors and tutors
- supervisors' awareness of the aims of YTS
- the availability of techniques and materials

Between 1983 and 1985 these issues were addressed by County-wide development activity directed simultaneously towards new training materials, the training of supervisors, and industrial liaison.

Work-Based Training Units

133 It has been recognised throughout our involvement with work-based learning that employers and supervisors lack an instrument for converting working into learning and that if such an instrument could be devised, programmes such as YTS would thereby improve dramatically in terms of definition

and quality. In 1983 and 1984 we designed and applied work-based training units to the County's Education Service YTS programmes, hoping that the units represented the instrument we sought. Work-based training units :

* were the training equivalent of job descriptions
* indicated the standards of performance required in each workplace
* specified a collection of activities which characterised one or more occupational areas
* specified quality factors
* indicated activities for role extension and skill transfer

134 The units were based on the principle that learning should grow from the real circumstances of working life : its activities, pressures, relationships, organisation, constraints and culture. They were a means of focusing the learning opportunities afforded by actual work roles and functions and of confirming learning through reflection, assessment and review. Breadth was ensured through the scope of each unit and the requirement to cover at least three in a training year.

A Modular Training System

135 Work-based training units were in use in 1984 and 1985 and were regarded as being a helpful means of structuring and assessing planned work experience and of raising supervisors' awareness of, and competence within, youth training (an example is included as appendix 4). However, they were also felt by many tutors and supervisors to be complex and they did not ensure the integration of programmes. Therefore in 1984 and 1985 a modular record system was phased in to replace work-based training units, off-job training records and other formative assessment records.

136 The modular training system in Bedfordshire has the following features :

i) each module contains up to 20 competence statements;

ii) the set of competences relates either to work role execution or to progression opportunities;

iii) each module is defined as a unit of assessment and accreditation;

iv) each module is presented on an identical assessment form which is printed on one side of A4 size paper;

v) guidance for use is given on the reverse of the assessment form for trainees, supervisors, tutors and programme organisers. The modules are colour coded four ways; each of the 4 users has one side of the assessment form identical to every other user's, and one side with distinct notes of guidance. To back up the modules, brief notes of guidance have been issued on standard setting, criterion referencing and assessment techniques.

137 Each trainee is expected to complete up to 20 modules, some of which lend themselves mainly to work-based delivery and some mainly to off-job delivery. Critically, it is the trainee backed by his or her liaison officer who builds up a record of achievement which is contributed to both at work and at college. Each module is centrally co-ordinated and forms part of a master list which specifies the credit for progression which successful completion of it should give.

Supervisor Training

138 To generate and maintain awareness, commitment and youth training skills among supervisors, the County Education Service in 1983 negotiated with the Local Accredited Training Centre to train and coach supervisors involved with its YTS programmes. Initially this facility, the Partnership Support Programme, offered a very broad programme which enabled supervisors to select one or several issues for coverage within short training sessions, normally held in each supervisor's own workplace. In recent months PSP has focused for most supervisors upon standard setting and assessment, using the materials and guidance issued on the modular arrangements now in place. Initially PSP was voluntary for supervisors; it is now a requirement for all those offering planned work experience and on-job training within the LEA's schemes.

Industrial Liaison

139 The discussion of the roles performed by counsellors has already explained their importance in providing a system of liaison during the pilot year (para. 100ff). The duties of introducing employers and supervisors to the Scheme, matching trainees and placements, monitoring and liaison with tutors, which were instituted during the Foundation Year Scheme, have provided a model for liaison throughout the Bedfordshire Education Service schemes. The largest of these is the mode A consortium providing 540 places in which the Local Authority acts as managing agent and the four colleges provide off-job training. The role of liaison officers in the consortium is central. They cover all the functions instituted for counsellors during the pilot year, and more. The liaison officers manage the assessment review and certification activities; they carry out off-job reviews by holding assessment sessions with college tutors and group of trainees. They are now the normal trainers of workplace supervisors in the PSP sessions (see para. 158).

The Broader Significance of the Scheme

140 The Foundation Year Scheme influenced the Bedfordshire LEA in a number of ways at a critical period for youth training. It injected confidence; demonstrated new ways of working; acted as a test bed for experiments; and housed new provisions.

141 The scheme got underway very quickly through the collective efforts of County Councillors, LEA and MSC officers, college management and local industry and commerce. The lack of time available for planning undoubtedly helped to maintain broad support for the scheme and to set aside for later consideration areas of disagreement. Once the scheme had got underway, the pressure to prepare for the main start of YTS focused positive attention upon it as a source of guidance for the County as a whole. Since there were very few models for an all-sector work-based youth training programme, officers became closely involved with programme design and other issues normally handled at institution

level. Therefore the result of the Scheme was to encourage an active co-ordinating approach by the LEA to youth training from then on.

142 The Foundation Year Scheme was set up without recourse to existing institutional models, but committed to maintaining appropriate conditions of service for staff. Once the available resources from the South Bedfordshire colleges and the County Careers Services were quantified, staff and physical resources were acquired and deployed within the Scheme strictly on the basis of the task to be undertaken and within tight spending limits. The Scheme had an enormous advantage in being able to start from scratch in this way since it was able to avoid areas of unnecessary expenditure on forms of organisation. In its three years of operation since 1982, the Scheme has avoided financial difficulties despite sharply declining income levels largely as a result of its initial mode of operation and its acceptance of the need for recurring major changes. A smaller version of the Foundation Year Scheme was established very quickly in an industrial unit in East Bedfordshire in 1983.

143 Following its pilot year, the Foundation Year Scheme retained its importance as a testbed for experiments, largely because it could respond at speed and guarantee sound organisation at all times. As the base for the County YTS Staff Development Officer it assisted the introduction of a continuous programme of staff support and training. It has led the development of a post-YTS education and training programme by starting a design and development workshop with funding from the MSC's Voluntary Projects Programme. It is expected to be a major provider of Community Programme training.

Conclusion

144 The Foundation Year Scheme represents for the Bedfordshire LEA a crucial element in its management and development of youth training. Over a period of three years the Scheme had made a substantial contribution both directly to YTS in

Bedfordshire and also to the associated aspects of staff training and support, adult training and the management of self-financed provision.

145 Since 1983, the significance of the Scheme to the Bedfordshire LEA has naturally diminished as other provision which benefited from its headstart have themselves made progress and fed this in to the overall County effort. This is all to the good and illustrates the spirit of trust and generosity which the Scheme was intended to instil.

146 From September 1985 the Scheme will cease to be an establishment in its own right, when it is incorporated as a unit of the Luton College of Higher Education. The incorporation is intended to help the Scheme to expand into other areas of activity within a coherent framework for non-advanced further education and training in South Bedfordshire. It is hoped that the current national activity heralded in the White Papers Training for Jobs (1984) and Education and Training for Young People (1985), together with the parent College's and the LEA's innovative stance, will enable the Scheme to maintain the spirit and purposefulness which it has demonstrated during and since its pilot year.

APPENDIX 1 : TABULATED DATA FROM THE INDUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE

TABLE 1 - Distribution of Trainees

Occupational Areas - all Strands

	Male	Female	Total
Human and Creative	14	31	45
Manufacture and Process	59	9	68
Broad Employment Skills	73	18	91
Business and Information	21	54	75
	167	112	279

Occupational Skills Areas - By Sets

Human and Creative - 3 Sets

	Male	Female	Total
Caring	-	15	15
Applied Design	9	6	15
Catering	5	10	15
	14	31	45

Manufacture and Process - 6 Sets

	Male	Female	Total
Engineering 'A' - Electrical	13	-	13
Engineering 'B' - Motor Mechanic	12	-	12
Engineering 'C' - General	11	-	11
Construction	13	-	13
Textiles	1	8	9
Science and Technology	9	1	10
	59	9	68

Broad Employment Skills - 7 Sets

	Male	Female	Total
Group 1	15	-	15
Group 2	6	6	12
Group 3	12	-	12
Group 4	14	-	14
Group 5	2	12	14
Group 6	11	-	11
Group 7	13	-	13
	73	18	91

Business and Information - 5 Sets

	Male	Female	Total
Office and Sales	5	9	14
Business and Office	-	15	15
Computer Applications	8	7	15
Office Skills	-	15	15
Retail and Distribution	8	8	16
	21	54	75

TABLE 2 - Occupations of Fathers

	%
Business and Office	7.1
Computing	1.0
Retail/Distribution/Service	12.1
Design and Productions	2.8
Engineering : Un/Semi-skilled	20.4
Skilled	9.6
Science and Technology	4.6
Construction	5.7
Farming	0.3
Unemployed	13.9
Economically inactive	2.1
No information/not known	20.4
	100.0

TABLE 3 - Occupations of Siblings

	%
Business and Office	6.3
Computing	1.1
Retail/Distribution/Service	18.4
Design and Production	1.1
Engineering : Apprenticeships	1.6
Un/semi-skilled	14.7
Skilled	12.6
Science and Technology	0.5
Construction	5.3
Farming	0.5
Further Education/Training Scheme	2.1
Self-Employed	3.2
Armed Forces/Police/Prison Service	3.7
Unemployed	3.2
No information/not known	25.7
	100.0

TABLE 4 - Vocational/Career Aspirations of Males and Females

Males

	%
Armed Forces/Police	8.2
Business/Office	2.4
Computing	3.5
Engineering : Apprenticeships	3.5
Un/Semi-skilled	6.5
Skilled	21.7
Construction	21.7
Arts/Performing Arts/Sports	7.1
Technicians	2.4
Professional jobs requiring FE/HE	5.3
Catering	2.4
Retail/Distribution Service	2.4
Others	5.3
'Don't know' or 'Anything'	7.6
	100.0

TABLE 4 (continued)

Females

	%
Armed Forces/Police	4.1
Business and Office	29.8
Arts/Performing Arts/Sports	8.3
Technicians	2.5
Professional jobs requiring FE/HE	4.1
Catering	9.9
Caring	20.7
Retail/Distribution/Service	9.9
Textiles	1.7
Others	2.5
'Don't know' or 'Anything'	6.5
	100.0

TABLE 5 - Distribution of Ethnic Minorities Within Training Strands

	H & C		M & P		B & I		B E S		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Caucasian	24	44	81	7	30	75	101	25	236	151
West Indian	4	9	12	2	2	6	16	5	34	22
Asian	1	2	3	3	-	4	9	1	13	10
Others	1	1	-	1	1	2	1	1	3	5
TOTAL	30	56	96	13	33	87	127	32	286	188

TABLE 6 - Examinations Taken by Trainees

Number of Subjects	%
No exams taken	6.4
16+ (1-3)	15.4
1 - 5 CSE's	31.2
6 CSE's and over	27.6
1 - 3 GCE 'O' levels	11.3
4 - 6 GCE 'O' levels	3.1
7 GCE 'O' levels and over	0.5
Others (RSA and Pitman's)	4.5
	100.0

TABLE 7 - Difference Between School and Training Environment

	%
Adult environment	24.9
Work experience/training/learning skills .	22.6
More independence/less discipline	14.9
Paid for training	12.2
Performing a variety of tasks	10.7
Others - 'nothing better to do'	14.7
	100.0

TABLE 8 - Sources of Information in Choosing Careers

	%
Through relatives and friends	26.0
Through Careers Office/teacher	22.8
Through the Armed Forces Careers	4.0
Own initiative and efforts	5.2
No information/not stated	42.0
	100.0

APPENDIX 2 : TUTOR/COUNSELLOR QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME .....

GROUP ..... DATE OF APPOINTMENT .....

SUBJECT/SKILL AREAS ..... Full/part-time (please delete)

CONTACT TIME PER WEEK .....

1. Why do you think you were selected for your post? .....

.....

a. What are your main strengths? .....

.....

2. What is FYP trying to achieve? .....

.....

a. Is the Project what you considered it to be? Has it met your expectations? .....

.....

.....

b. What has been your major contribution to the scheme?

.....

.....

c. Which elements of the Project do you identify with?

.....

3. How would you rate this scheme as compared to other 16+ provision in schools and further education colleges? .....

.....

.....

.....

4. What differentiates the FYP from other training programmes?

.....

.....

a. What is the relationship between the MSC and Bedfordshire County Council over this project? .....

.....

5. FOR PART-TIME STAFF ONLY

Are you in full-time employment? YES/NO.

a. If yes, who are your employers? .....

.....

b. If no, do you have any other part-time work? .....

.....

6. Would you like to comment on the general intake of trainees?

a. What is their general level of educational attainment?

.....

b. What attracted trainees to the scheme? .....

.....

c. Did you interview any of the trainees during the selection? If so, what attributes were you looking for?

.....

.....

7. What in your opinion are the characteristics of a good trainee? .....

a. Have you seen any of these in your set? .....

.....

b. What are some of the problems that trainees have presented you with? .....

.....

.....

c. How were these problems dealt with? .....

.....

8. How valuable do you think the work experience element of the programme is? .....

.....

.....

a. What does the work experience placement offer a trainee? .....

b. What do employers look for during the on-the-job training? .....

.....

9. Has there been any significant changes in trainees' attitudes and behaviour since the Project started? .....

.....

a. To what extent has this change affected your concept as a trainer? .....

.....

10. Most trainees believe that the success or failure of this project will ultimately depend on actual job placements. Do you agree? .....

.....

11. What are some of the good things that the Project has been able to achieve so far? .....

.....

a. What aspects of the Project could be improved? .....

.....

.....

12. Do you feel you are getting enough support and encouragement from other colleagues and management? .....

.....

13. Looking ahead, do you think the Youth Training Scheme has a long-term future in post-school provision? .....

.....

a. For whom do you think the YTS is intended? .....

.....

b. For whom do you think the YTS is suitable? .....

.....

FURTHER COMMENTS :

APPENDIX 3 : ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT

Trainee :
Supervisor :
Organisation :
Address :

Working Hours in Placement:
Placement Date : From:
To:

You are asked to assist the trainee by meeting with him or her during week 4 and week 8 and completing one copy of this record on the basis of observed conduct, effort and attainment. On these occasions the trainee will meet you prepared with a tentative personal view of his or her progress. If you would prefer to pass comments to the Project staff, or to have us join the assessment discussions, this will be arranged on request.

Area of Assessment	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	Unacceptable	Comments (where appropriate
TIMEKEEPING						
APPEARANCE						
PHYSICAL CAPACITY						
ABILITY a) to follow instructions						
b) to work steadily						
c) to complete task in a reasonable time						
RELATIONSHIPS a) with supervisor						
b) with other employees						
USING COMMON SENSE/ INITIATIVE						
AWARENESS a) of the organisation and its needs						
b) of personal situation and development						

JOB SKILLS	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Unacceptable	Not tested
a) General: Communication						
Calculations						
Safe working						
b) Specific						

Further Comments _____

_____

_____

Date of Assessment _____

Signed _____
(For organisation)

Signed _____
(Trainee)

APPENDIX 4

1 **WORK BASED TRAINING UNIT**

OTF: 9 - Personal Services and Sales
PURPOSE: Satisfying the needs of Individual Customers
TRAINING UNIT: CUSTOMERS' SERVICES (1)
ORGANIZATION:
LOCATION OF PLACEMENT:

2	**ACTIVITY:** CREATE APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT **ELEMENTS:**	**CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT**	**LO refs**
	by maintaining attractive work station; by correct dress; by avoiding health and safety hazards; by appropriate language and behaviour; by demonstrating product knowledge	orderliness; attractiveness; tidiness; appropriatenss; correctness; empathy; accuracy; clarity of expression APPLIED STANDARDS	

3	**ACTIVITY:** DETERMINE CUSTOMER NEEDS **ELEMENTS:**	**CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT**	**LO refs**
	by question and answer; face to face; by correspondence; by telephone	questioning techniques; politeness; drafting skills; quality of presentation; clarity, note-taking accurately APPLIED STANDARDS	

4	**ACTIVITY:** INFLUENCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY **ELEMENTS:**	**CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT**	**LO refs**
	by demonstration of product; by explanation of product benefits; by comparison with other proudcts by handling objections; by closing the sale; by creating a second sale; by negotiation	accurate knowledge; careful handling; clarity of expression; selectivity clarity;. accuracy; discretion; selectivity tact; judgement; questioning; techniques within correct procedures APPLIED STANDARDS	

82

5 **ACTIVITY:** PROVIDE APTER-SALES SERVICE

ELEMENTS:

by providing advice on product use;

by providing replacement parts;

by arranging servicing (where appropriate)

by handling customer complaints

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

clarity; empathy; accuracy; speed of service; speed of service with tact; consideration

APPLIED STANDARDS

LO refs

6 **QUALITY**
EFFICIENCY

With accuracy, and in good time, be able to use procedures for control of stocks, cash, and security

Handle and/or report any variances in control systems

Deal with customer enquiries correctly and to time

Work honestly and correctly without supervision

7 **RELATIONSHIPS**

Share relevant work information and ideas with other people at the workplace

Work co-operatively with other staff by being prepared to stand in for others, perform others' jobs, carry group tasks

Achieve satisfactory personal relationships with other staff by compromising; listening; discussing.

9:1

8 **ROLE EXTENSION** FIND OUT HOW TO CREATE

ACTIVITY: APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT IN

ELEMENTS: A NEW CONTEXT

determine dress, language and behaviour

health and safety considerations;

physical lay-out and range of product knowledge required in new context

PLANNED OUTCOMES

EXAMPLE:

Wider range and depth of skills, awareness and selective use

ACTUAL:

LO refs

9 **ACTIVITY:** FIND OUT HOW TO DETERMINE NEEDS

ELEMENTS: OF CUSTOMERS IN A NEW CONTEXT

determine techniques required for face to face questioning, correspondence and telephoning required in new context

PLANNED OUTCOMES

EXAMPLE:

increased breadth and depth of skills, and selective use;

ACTUAL: anticipation of customer needs

LO refs

10	ACTIVITY: FIND OUT HOW TO INFLUENCE ELEMENTS: CUSTOMERS IN A DIFFERENT CONTEXT determine appropriate methods to relate product characteristics to customer's required needs; handle objection and close sale in new context	PLANNED OUTCOMES EXAMPLE: increased breadth and depth of selling skills and selective use ACTUAL	LO refs

11	ACTIVITY: FIND OUT WHAT WOULD BE ELEMENTS: APPROPRIATE AFTER-SALES SERVICE REQUIREMENTS IN A NEW CONTEXT determine after-sales requirements of new context	PLANNED OUTCOMES EXAMPLE: increased breadth and depth skills; anticipation of customer needs ACTUAL	LO refs

12 OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ABOUT THE WORLD OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

PERSONAL SURVIVAL:

EXERCISING CITIZENSHIP:

CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY:

SELF EMPLOYMENT:

CONTINUING EDUCATION:

LEISURE ACTIVITIES:

JOB CANDIDATE:

13 NOTES

9:1

14 Signed _____ Sponsor _____

Signed _____ Managing Agency _____

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